

# via paciis

*The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker community*

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Mike Lyons and Ben Griffin at the Old Firehouse in Des Moines on August 16, 2013.

## A Conversation with VETERANS FOR PEACE UK

by Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs

*This August, the Des Moines Catholic Worker was fortunate to host two distinguished guests from the United Kingdom—Ben Griffin and Mike Lyons— war resisters, conscientious objectors, and founding members of Veterans for Peace UK.*

*Ben and Mike joined us in Des Moines following the National Veterans for Peace Convention in Madison, Wisconsin, which they attended with DMCW community members Gil Landolt, Al Burney and Eddie Bloomer.*

*Following the convention, Ben and Mike embarked on a Midwest speaking tour on the theme “I Will Not Fight for Queen and Country.”*

**Q:** How has your Midwest tour been going?

**ML:** Really good. We’ve met loads of interesting, friendly, hospitable people that put us up, fed us, it’s been great. And lots of interesting people we’ve been able to meet at the talks as well, with very interesting points of view.

**Q:** Tell me about your military service and how you ended up in Vets for Peace UK.

**ML:** I joined the Royal Navy Submarine Service. After a few years of service and just before deployment to Afghanistan the Bradley Manning Wikileaks truths were unveiled and the “Collateral Murder” video. And after informing myself of the situation out

there and the reasons why we were out there I decided I could no longer be part of that conflict or part of the military. I couldn’t be a small cog in that machine.

So I filed for conscientious objection. I knew I was one, but the Navy didn’t recognize me as one, partly because I was an atheist and partly because if they recognized me as one then whenever anyone else had any objections they’d have to recognize them—so a bit of a “catch-22-ism” there. And so in the end I refused the rifle-training course and they sent me to military prison and dishonorably discharged me, sentenced me to seven months. Within that time, Ben had been doing some stuff with the Catholic Worker and on his own as Veterans for Peace. He got in touch and informed me of Veterans for Peace and I was more than willing to get into it when I got out.

**BG:** I joined the British Army in 1997. I was a true believer—I believed that Britain was a good country and that we got involved in just wars. I served in Northern Ireland, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan.

In 2005, I started serving in the Special Air Service. I was deployed to Baghdad, in a joint US-UK special ops force. The job I was involved in there was detaining what were called “high value targets.” However, a lot of the people that we ended up detaining were nothing to do with the insurgency. I actually found out afterwards that only like two percent of the people that we detained as a coalition had anything to do with the insurgency. We handed those people to interrogators and then those people ended up in prisons where they were tortured.

I found it very difficult during the job in Iraq, looking at peoples’ faces when we went into their houses and just couldn’t stop thinking what must they be feeling about us, what must they be thinking about us. And it all came to a head when my commanding officer came out

see **VETERANS FOR PEACE** on pg 4

## via pacis

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### THE DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER COMMUNITY

*The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition.*

*We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, shower, or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that advocate social justice.*

### BECOMING A DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER

We are open to new community members. For information about joining our mission, contact any community member or visit our website: [www.dmcatholicworker.org](http://www.dmcatholicworker.org).

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[frank.cordaro@gmail.com](mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com)  
Live-in community members:  
Frank Cordaro, Tommy Schmitz  
Live-in resident: Bob Cook, Jessica Reznicek

### VIOLA LIUZZO HOUSE

(New name pending)  
1301 8th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-401-4197 or better yet Renee's cell 515-664-1326  
Live-in community members: Julie Brown

### RACHEL CORRIE HOUSE

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Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-777-2180  
Live-in community members: Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs,  
Norman Searah, Ed Bloomer

### WEEKLY LECTIONARY BIBLE STUDY

Mondays, 7:00 pm. Berrigan House.  
Call to confirm.

### MONTHLY VETERANS FOR PEACE MEETING

Berrigan House. For more information, contact Gil Landolt at [peacevet@hotmail.com](mailto:peacevet@hotmail.com) or call 515-333-2180.

### WEEKLY AA MEETING

Fridays, 5:00 pm, Berrigan house

### THE CHIAPAS PROJECT

Chiapas, Mexico  
Richard Flamer  
[flamerrichard@hotmail.com](mailto:flamerrichard@hotmail.com)

*As for ourselves, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile.*  
-Dorothy Day



# Omaha Catholic Worker Jerry Ebner's locked up for six months



Omaha Catholic Worker Jerry Ebner reported to Lexington Federal Medical Center to start his six-month prison term on September 2nd. Jerry was sentenced for "line crossing" at Offutt Air Force Base/STRATCOM last December 28th as reported in the last issue of the *via pacis*. Jerry would appreciate all the support he can get. He has very little money and medical concerns and having a good support community on the outside makes doing time much easier.

### Ways to help Jerry

#### Write a letter:

Jerry's mailing address will be:  
Gerald A. Ebner 24467-045 (correct BOP # for Jerry)  
Lexington FMC  
Federal Medical Center PO BOX 14500  
Lexington, KY 40512

#### Send Money:

Money for Jerry's Federal Commissary Account can be sent to Jerry by US POSTAL MONEY ORDERS made out to:  
Gerald A. Ebner 24467-045 (correct BOP # for Jerry)  
(Checks need Jerry's BOP #24467-045 along with his proper first name Gerald A.)

#### Send all US POSTAL MONEY ORDERS for Jerry to:

Federal Bureau of Prisons  
Gerald A. Ebner 24467-045 (correct BOP # for Jerry)  
PO BOX 47401  
Des Moines, Iowa 50947-0001

#### Jerry's Lexington support person is:

Janice Sevre-Duszynska  
email: [rhythmsofthedance@gmail.com](mailto:rhythmsofthedance@gmail.com),  
phone: 859-684-4247

**You can also get updates on Jerry from Frank Cordaro.**

Jerry has very little money on the outside. He has no source for cash on the inside except for what friends and supporters can sendhim. Having enough \$\$\$ on your books can make a big difference inequality of life while locked up. Please be generous . . .

# BENEFIT ART SHOW

## for The Rachel Corrie Project Palestine Delegation

Friday, November 1  
at 7 p.m.

Ritual Cafe  
1301 Locust Street, Des Moines

Featuring music by  
Ras Badjao and the Tarakis

All art sales will benefit the Rachel Corrie Project. The Rachel Corrie Project is an effort by a small Catholic anarchist-pacifist community in Des Moines, Iowa to train everyday people in third party nonviolent intervention and solidarity models and place them with peace teams in armed conflict zones overseas, as well as to provide a sanctuary for returning international solidarity activists. Proceeds from the show will assist in sending a team to Palestine in February, 2014.



#### For more info, contact:

Julie Brown  
[stormsage1@yahoo.com](mailto:stormsage1@yahoo.com)  
(515) 777-2180  
<http://rc.dmcatholicworker.org>

# Flash: If you get this before Oct. 15, join us! Occupy the World Food Prize Events

Tuesday, Oct. 15, 7 p.m. - Panel Discussion: "Bishop Dingman, His Life, Witness and Prophetic Words" - Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, 2001 Forest Ave.

Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m. - "From Factory Farms to GMOs The Upchuck Rebellion Is Taking Root" - Jim Hightower takes on Corporate Ag and the World Food Prize. - First United Methodist Church, 1001 Pleasant St.

Guest appearance: Cardinal Turkson, the head peace and justice man for the Pope. One of three "World Leaders" slated to talk at a World Food Prize event, he is opposed to GMO farming!

Thursday, Oct. 17, 6 p.m. - Occupy the World Food Prize Rally and Direct Action on State Capitol - People's Park, west of Capitol at E. 7th and Locust

Housing for out-of-towners is available at the Des Moines Catholic Worker.

#### For more information, contact:

Frank Cordaro - Occupy the World Food Prize / Des Moines Catholic Worker  
(515) 282-4781  
[frank.cordaro@gmail.com](mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com)  
[occupytheworldfoodprize.com](http://occupytheworldfoodprize.com)

# RIP Fr. Larry Morlan (1960 – 2013): Catholic Worker, Plowshares Activist and Priest

by Frank Cordaro

The sad and unexpected news of Fr. Larry Morlan's death came as a slap across the face. Larry Morlan was a great Catholic Worker, a better Plowshares activist and a Catholic priest. We did the Gods of Metal Plowshares together with Sisters Carol Gilbert, Ardeth Platte and Kathy Boylan in May 1998.

There were over 30 priests, plus a bishop concelebrating the funeral Mass. If you count all the servers and deacons in robes, there were more people "in" the liturgy than attending the liturgy. Fr. Jerry Ward, Larry's first pastor, whom he served right after ordination, gave the homily. Fr. Jerry did a wonderful job! He talked about Larry's life-long commitment to the Gospel, his untiring support to the poor and Larry's bottom-line directive to follow the nonviolent Jesus. Fr. Jerry shared about how much Larry loved being a parish priest and serving the people in his parish. And above all, Larry loved most celebrating the Eucharist.

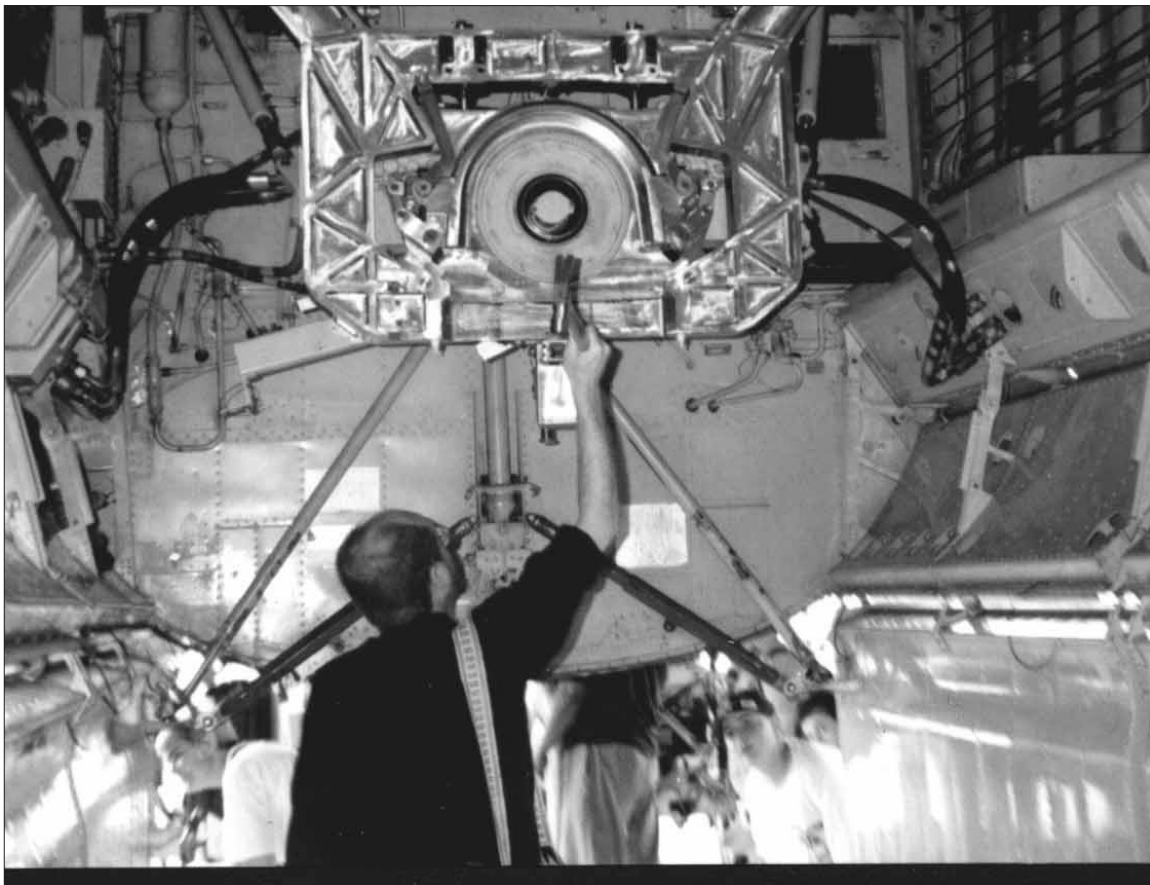
Fr. Jerry also shared about how the parish received word of Fr. Larry's participation in the Gods of Metal Plowshares and how it divided the parish at first. And when things settled down and the people in the parish reflected upon who Fr. Larry was, most everyone in the parish were not surprised by what Fr. Larry did, and whether they agreed or not, they all knew Fr. Larry was following Jesus as best he knew how. And then Fr. Ward called it all good.

At the gravesite, John LaForge, Fr. Jim Murphy, Mike Sprong and myself, Fr. Larry's peace friends, held a peace flag off to the side while the traditional prayers were recited. After the gravesite service the four of us sang two verses of "Down By The Riverside."

Being a friend of Larry's was not easy. And I did it poorly.

Peace is a difficult thing to find in all of our life's journeys for all of us. I trust Larry found that peace, in the same faith. I trust I will know my peace when my time comes. All of it is a gift from God.

Larry Morlan - Presente!



Fr. Larry Morlan disarming a B-52 bomber at an air show on Andrews Air Force Base during the Gods of Metal Plowshares action in 1998.

## RIP Rita Hohenshell, a member of Heaven's Widow Brigade

by Frank Cordaro

Before I ever met Rita Hohenshell at the Des Moines Catholic Worker, she had already lived a full life. Born in 1925, she was raised on a farm in Lynn County. Rita got married in the 1950s, moved to Des Moines and worked 30 years and was active in her union. She and her husband "Shorty" raised four kids, did the parenting, schooling, church thing; she was very active in school, church and civic groups.

During these first 60 years or so, there was nothing really special or noteworthy about Rita by TV news and the *Des Moines Register* standards. Except for the people who knew her personally, especially her family, friends and children. To them, she was an exceptional woman, in the areas that matter, in "Kingdom Work/Women's Work."

Rita's story is much the same as her good friends, Helen Tichy and Helen Oster. In my mind's eye (and in the attached photo), whenever I see Rita, I also see the two Helens by her side. All three are flesh and bone examples of a demographic group of women, who found their "peace and justice" voices, matched by courageous prophetic visions and actions, only after they raised their kids and outlived their husbands. They are part of Heaven's Widow Brigade.

For the last 15 years of her life Rita had done it all. She spent many shifts over the years at the Catholic Worker, serving and feeding our guest. And for years, we were the fortunate recipients of her federal tax protest. She would always send a check to her favorite charities with the money she was supposed to pay her U.S. taxes. The Catholic Worker got a lot of that money. She vigiled and protested all over the country and at home. She was arrested numerous times in nonviolent protest and did months of jail time! She visited other countries and the poor and oppressed there. She belonged to and gave leadership to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, JustFaith, Amnesty International, SOA Watch, DM Call to Action and Catholic Peace Ministry. She would have no



Rita Hohenshell with Helen Tichy and Helen Oster—Des Moines Catholic Workers three "Mother Marys," our advocates in Heaven.

doubt been a recipient of the Bishop Dingman Award like the two Helens except that she was on the Catholic Peace Ministry board until just recently, and board members are excluded from receiving the award.

The first member of Heaven's Widow Brigade is Mary, the mother of Jesus. When the authors of the Gospels started to collect information about Jesus, they would have sought out Jesus's mother. Most likely, the authors did not know the elderly Mary personally (possible but not likely). More likely, they got secondhand info on Mary and Jesus

from someone who knew the elderly widow Mary personally. Mary found her "peace and justice" voice, matched by her courageous prophetic visions and actions, only after she raised Jesus and outlived her husband Joseph.

At her death at 88, Rita left eight grandkids and four great-grandkids who will miss her terribly. She also left Catholic Workers and her peace and justice friends with yet another example of what it means to be a follower of Jesus as a full member of Heaven's Widow Brigade, and we miss her terribly too.

## Midwest Catholic Worker Frac Sand Trial Begins for 35 CWers & Friends

Dec 9th is the trial date for the 35 people who got arrested in Winona, MN at the Midwest Catholic Worker Faith and Resistance Retreat and have not already plead guilty.

For updates and more info on the trial and related events in Winona contact:

Mike Leutgeb Munson  
E-mail: mtlmunson@gmail.com  
Phone: 507-452-5672

VETERANS FOR PEACE, continued from pg 1

to Iraq and speaking to all of us said that he was worried that we were becoming the secret police of Baghdad. So that combined with a lot of other things that I saw and heard about in Iraq convinced me that I shouldn't be taking part in that conflict. When I was home on leave I decided to get an interview with the CO and I told him that I wasn't going to return to Iraq. I expected to be put in jail but within two months I was released from the Army.

And that would have been the end of the story, but after I left the Army and soon the lies that our politicians and our media were peddling about what was going on in Iraq. I felt an obligation or a duty to start talking about my own experiences, to try and let people know what was really happening out there. And I did that for several years until 2008 when I was taken to the High Court, the Royal Courts of Justice and given a lifetime injunction by the Ministry of Defense and a 50,000-pound fine.

**Q:** Have you paid that fine?

**BG:** No I stopped paying the fine. They don't seem—I keep saying this is prodding them with a stick—but they don't seem to keen on enforcing the injunction. But I'm not too bothered about what they do to me, so I've stopped paying the fine and I've stopped obeying the injunction.

**Q:** Would you be willing to go to prison?

**BG:** Yes.

**Q:** Mike, let me ask you about your time in prison. First of all, was it worth it?

**ML:** That's kind of a difficult one. I didn't enjoy myself there. The main thing I got was a real sense of relief. As I said, it went on—from the time of me actually filing for Conscientious Objection and resisting—there was a good year before I even saw trial, so I was just kept in this limbo. I didn't know what was going to happen in my future. I didn't know if they were going to keep me in the Navy, if they were going to imprison me, or if I was going to be out of a job within a couple of weeks. So when I got there, there was this sense of relief—the whole thing's over, I just need to do a few months and then I can get on with the rest of my life.

**Q:** How did you spend your time in jail?

**ML:** I read a lot. Because I'd made up in my mind that I wanted to go to medical school, I managed to convince the education guy that I should do some online studies to help with science preparation. So that was good. Every day I was going to the classroom and just going through free online science courses—Biology, Chemistry—up to, like, a level three standard.

And then I'd read lots in the evening. I read Crime and Punishment. I thought it was apt. I read Catch-22, which was incredible. It really spoke to me, that book. And I read an excellent book on the arms trade by a British comedian called Mark Thomas. I don't know how that

book ended up in this military prison library. It must have been planted there by some other cool guy. And speaking to the guys as well, because I got on with most of the prisoners in there. Most of them were there for AWOL, and a lot of them just wanted to learn stuff about the conflicts. Some of them had actually been involved them. So I'd speak to them—and play football.

**Q:** What is Vets for Peace working on right now?

**BG:** We're still involved in a Bradley Manning solidarity campaign. We've been outside the US Embassy every time he's in court, blasting out the "Collateral Murder" audio at the US Embassy in London.

We're also continuously involved in getting to schools and telling the students of our experiences, to try and let them know the real nature of what military life is about and what going into conflict is about, to try and counter the myths of the propaganda machine and the computer games and video games.

Over the next few months we're moving into a campaign where we're going to fast for the Guantanamo detainees every Friday and wear an orange armband and try and raise the discussion in our workplaces and on the street about the Guantanamo issue. We're also organizing alongside a lot of other peace groups—in 2014 the British government is going to spend fifty million pounds trying to whitewash the First World War, and we're involved with other peace groups to see what we can do to make sure we don't let them do that.

**Q:** When you're out in front of the Embassy, what kind of response do you get? Have you gotten any response from the Embassy itself?

**BG:** No, most of the people who come in and out of the Embassy are pretty uncomfortable with it. That audio on its own is quite graphic—the gunfire and the way the helicopter pilots talk to each other, so it's quite a disturbing piece of audio. People will walk past us—we actually stand in a line facing the Embassy—and some people will have disturbed looks on their faces. Other people are supportive of us.

**Q:** What do you foresee in the future for Vets for Peace?

**BG:** In 2012, there was a bylaw change within Veterans for Peace in the United States that allows international chapters outside of the US and also veterans from non-USA countries to join. So we in the UK were the first to form a chapter, but we've got guys in Spain, Australia, Ireland, Germany, and I think Russia as well, who are looking to organize. So my hope is that Veterans for Peace becomes an international organization of veterans from many different countries, all serving the cause of world peace.

**Q:** I know that you've also done some work with the Catholic Worker in London, is that right?

**BG:** Yeah, I work alongside the Catholic Worker guys. We're involved in similar campaigns. With other groups as well, we've been involved in the Bradley Manning and the Julian Assange solidarity campaigns. I've worked closely with Ciarron O'Reilly at the London Catholic Worker often organizing and planning stuff in conjunction with him.

# Father Carl Kabat's 80th Birthday Celebration!

*Twenty-four arrested (including eleven Catholic Workers) at Kansas City's new nuclear weapons parts plant*

On July 13, about 80 persons sang and prayed at the entry road to the new Kansas City facility in the U.S. nuclear weapons complex to celebrate the 80th Birthday of Fr. Carl Kabat. By 10:30 a.m., two dozen protesters had crossed the property line and were soon arrested. Fr. Kabat has spent 17 years in prison for acts of civil resistance to nuclear weapons. On this occasion, he had invited friends to join him and his boss, Fr. William Antone, OMI, of Washington, D.C., who is the OMI order's U.S. provincial superior, to come to Kansas City to celebrate his birthday by "crossing the line" and getting arrested at the new nuke weapons plant.

The five-building facility, the Kansas City Plant, at 14510 Botts Road in Kansas City, Missouri, will by next year house the operations of the current Kansas City Plant (at Bannister and Troost), where 85 percent of the non-nuclear parts for U.S. nuclear weapons are made or procured.

During a brief ceremony, those gathered pledged "to strive for peace within myself and seek to be a peacemaker in my daily life . . . to persevere in nonviolence of tongue and heart . . . to work to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth."

With the assembly singing "Open the Door," written for the occasion, 24 persons stepped through a door marked "Open the door to a nuclear-weapons-free world," the rallying call of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

*Those arrested were:*

- Fr. Carl Kabat, Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI), of the St. Louis Catholic Worker, who had previously entered the property and been charged with destruction of property in July 2011 and July 2012
- Fr. William Antone, OMI, of Washing-



DMCWers Ed Bloomer, Jessica Reznicek and Frank Cordaro crossing the line with Fr. Carl Kabat and friends at Kansas City nuke weapons parts plant on July 13, 2013.

- ton, D.C., the OMI order's U.S. provincial superior
  - From the Kansas City area: Sister of Charity of Leavenworth Cele Breen, Jim Everett - Independence, MO, Notre Dame Sister of Omaha Theresa Maly, Community of Christ minister Lu Mountenay, Holy Family Catholic Workers Christian Brother Louis Rodemann and Nehemiah Rosell, Lauren Logan, Kelsey Schmidt, Jane Stoever, Ann Suellentrop, and Georgia Walker
    - Frank Cordaro, Ed Bloomer, and Jessica Reznicek - Des Moines, IA Catholic Workers
      - Fr. William "Bix" Bichsel SJ - Taoma, WA Catholic Worker
      - Cassandra Dixon - Mary Catholic Worker House, Oxford, WI
      - Paul Freid of Lake City, MN Catholic Worker Farm
      - Betsy Keenan - Strangers and Guest Catholic Worker Farm, Maloy, IA
      - Chrissy Kirchhoefer, St. Louis Catholic Worker and Anneliese Stoever of St. Louis
      - Janice Sevre-Duszynska, a Catholic woman priest of Lexington, KY
      - Jerry Zawada, a Franciscan priest of

Milwaukee, WI

The 24 line-crossers were arrested, fingerprinted, photographed, and then detained in the Jackson County Police Department. Some were released July 13, some July 14, and the last two resisters from the Des Moines Catholic Worker Ed Bloomer and Frank Cordaro were released July 15.

Three different court dates were given the 24 arrested, in August, September and October. First- and second-timers who plead guilty have been given fines, court costs and community service. Those not pleading guilty are looking to have a group trial in the fall.

Third time line-crossers, Des Moines Catholic Workers Ed Bloomer and Frank Cordaro, returned to court Sept 4th, with two outstanding warrants from two previous convictions for refusal to pay past court fines and fees. Ed and Frank plead guilty to the July 13 line crossing and told Judge Anne LaBella they would continue refusing to pay any money for past or future fines, fees or court costs in solidarity with the poor. Frank again told the court that they were nothing more than a collection agency. Judge LaBella took offense to Frank's characterization of her court, but she also did not want to send Ed or Frank to jail because it would "cost the city \$68 a day" to house them. So she took the prosecutor's recommendations and sentenced Ed and Frank to six months in jail and suspended the jail sentence, instead ordering Ed and Frank to pay a larger fine, plus more court costs and hundreds of hours of community service. She also gave them return court dates to deal with the warrants in Judge Franko's court. Ed and Frank are not planning on returning to KC until the next protest.

For updates on the trial and future actions contact:  
Jane Stoever,  
janepstoever@yahoo.com  
913-206-4088

# THE ROOTS OF ANARCHISM, PART TWO: The Collision of Life and Death

by Tommy Schmitz

Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

—Henry David Thoreau, “On the Duty of Civil Disobedience,” 1849

I heartily accept the motto, “That government is best which governs least”; and I should like to see it acted up to, more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe: That government is best which governs not at all; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have.

—Henry David Thoreau, “On the Duty of Civil Disobedience,” 1849

Let’s repeat that one phrase: “That government is best which governs not at all; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have.” Quick question.

“When men are prepared for it?” Why does Thoreau think “men” are not prepared for it? Would somebody please write an essay about that? Eric Fromm gave it a shot in writing “Escape from Freedom.” But Eric Fromm was not an anarchist, not even an anarchist in disguise.

Any volunteers? Okay, I will. And by the way, Fromm was a smart guy, but he didn’t get it. Read this essay. Read Kropotkin. Then, read Fromm. You’ll get it. Humankind is prepared for it. We are “good-to-go” for self-government. We always have been. Always will be. This essay, I hope, will demonstrate why.

Actually, as Kropotkin spells it out, humankind’s so-called “un-readiness for anarchy” is anarchy’s most pretentiously called-forth dismissal. Only the elite can control and rule. Plato said so, in a reiteration, a validation of a cultural propaganda of the need for hierarchy that already had existed for millennia, attaching itself to the lives of everyone, from birth to death.

Anarchy means “without a master.” To define the word, anarchy, as “without a leader” is semantically self-delusional. The word, leader, is relative, even to anarchy. The word “master” has no place in any conversation of anarchy. But in hierarchy? Read on.

We do not need a master . . . not under any of his “play-nice” names or games, nor in any of his sanctifying garb, accoutrements, nor with any of his courtiers, lobbyists, judges, lawyers, policemen, sycophants or rules of law.

Again, why do so many insist we are not ready for “self-government,” when in fact it already forms the basis of many of our social behaviors?

Saying we’re not ready for anarchy is like saying we don’t exist. It’s a body-slam disregard of the existence of one’s own self.

And guess what? It’s supposed to be. Because this is exactly how we have been trained, and is indeed how we have been living and dying, generation after generation, for thousands of years, under the prolific and swindling forms of hierarchic social-political structures.

These days, hierarchy takes form in the nation-state. Regardless of ideology, politics or beliefs, the nation-state rules our every cerebral neuron. And, of course, we’re not aware of it. It forms the fantasy foundation of nearly every culture that has, inevitably, risen, fallen and disappeared ever since the emergence of patriarchy, with its “Lookie here, now. I’m the boss. It says so. Written on these rocks, these entrails, this parchment, these books, this library, these laws”—all given directly to me by those three divine, all powerful immoralities: God, flag and country.

In any nation-state, the elite rule. We, the rabble, are depersonalized. Stripped of our very person, our being, our souls. We are, as former Attorney General, Janet Reno described, the “useless eaters.”

We are also, at bottom, regardless of hierarchy and anarchy, existential beings, daily maintaining some fabricated but necessary self-identity.

Discussions of anarchism rarely address issues of depth psychology, of who we are to ourselves in view of our existential natures. To this writer, it’s a vital missing gap in our self-and-social understanding.

For just a moment, let’s forget about hierarchy and anarchy.

Each of us exists in an existential quandary. This quandary is a two-fold collision of our natural human feelings of certainty and uncertainty.

The human certainty is singular and simple. “I exist.” It is a feeling we cannot deny or doubt.

The unsolvable human uncertainty is not why, or who, or where, or what, or how. Our uncertainty is when.

To repeat Isaac Newton from the previous issue (July 2013), we are not witness to our own creation, to our own coming into being. Yes, we have a birthday. Yes, there were sperm and egg uniting. But we cannot put a finger on the beginning of our existence. We feel a constant continuum throughout life of the feeling of who we are. Yet unlike all the important happenings in our life, the feeling of our existence has no feeling of a start, a beginning. No “when.” We feel as though we’ve always been here. And this feeling of our existence is rich with sweetness, rich with love, and in countless ways.

We are certain of our existence. And because we feel no beginning of our existence, we feel eternal, looking back. But looking forward, we know, without a doubt, that we will die.

Yes, life is sweet. Simultaneously, life feels like some kind of cosmic joke. The feeling of our certainty of existence without a beginning . . . collides with our knowledge of our death. Our existence, and its feeling of certainty, is irrational—not good or bad in any way—simply unfathomable, incomprehensible.

In depth psychology, we can call this collision “existential anxiety.” Many depth psychologists, namely Otto Rank, describe in detail how we personally create identities and how we socially create culture, in order to deny this collision, this existential anxiety with which we each are born. Otto Rank, in fact, describes the necessity of doing so, in order to maintain a sense of well being, so that life can feel the sweet personal qualities, both individually and socially, that validate our existence in the face of this collision of certainty and uncertainty.

So far, so good. Yet individually and socially, this existential anxiety-feeling, does acquire clinical characteristics, neurotic characteristics, sometimes psychotic characteristics. And personally and socially we adapt with irrational functioning and dysfunctioning.

On social levels, this dysfunctioning has created hierarchy in its many forms, the most caustic of which is “empire.”

On individual levels, this clinical anxiety dysfunction reaches its apex in a feeling which denies our only certainty, our existence. On this personal level of anxiety, we feel as though we don’t exist. Clinically, it is euphemistically called de-personalization. It is, perhaps, the very worst feeling that any one human being can experience. One

knows he is alive with all senses functioning, yet one feels non-existent. The theologian Paul Tillich, in his work *The Courage to Be*, brilliantly discusses this personal condition, this very personal feeling, as “non-being.” He describes its therapy as courage.

Yet what is the therapy for dysfunction of hierarchy, fascism, totalitarianism and empire?

Remember the graphic from Part One’s article in the previous *via pacis*. We’re reproducing it, corn stalks and all, to unpack its significance that becomes dreadfully clear in the words of its accompanying editorial, written by Ray Stannard Baker. Yes, it came from the December 2, 1899 edition of Harper’s Weekly. I have the original hard copy sitting on my desk.

Our editorial is titled, “Prosperity Reigns—The Nation Gives Thanks.” The editorial is written in such a way, naively or not, to make it clear how this spanking-new prosperity came about, and so unexpectedly!

I know what you’re thinking. We all Americans just pulled ourselves up by our bootstraps and made it happen, right? This unforeseen economic spurt was all hard work and God, right?

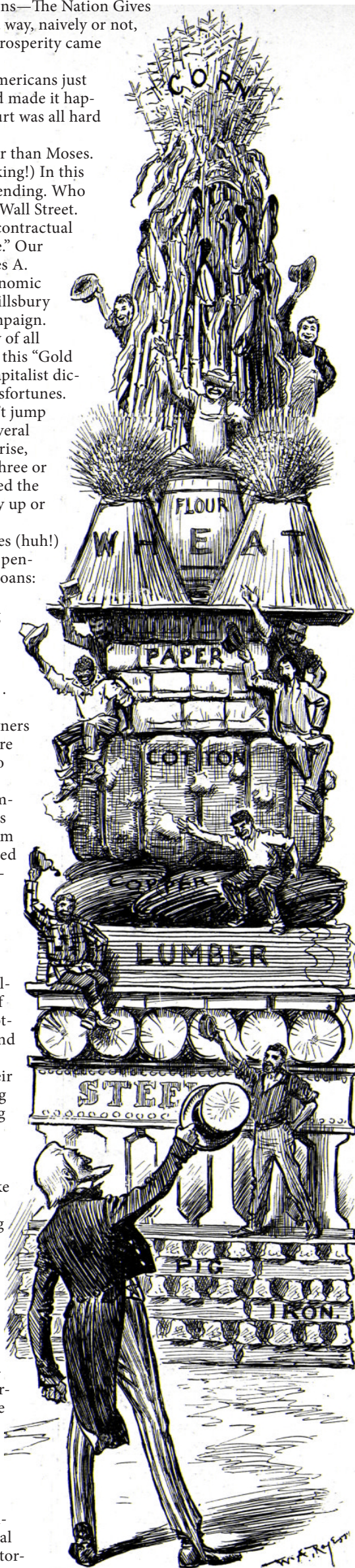
Here’s what happened. Something older than Moses. It’s called predatory lending. (Huh! Shocking!) In this case predatory Midwestern family farm lending. Who were the lenders? The big Eastern banks. Wall Street. (Huh! No . . .) What was the clever little contractual clausal catch? It’s called “The Gold Clause.” Our writer, Mr. Baker, had interviewed Charles A. Pillsbury of Minneapolis who was an economic adviser (besides posing for the original Pillsbury Doughboy sketches) to the McKinley campaign. Pillsbury told McKinley to make a survey of all mortgages in the Midwest that contained this “Gold Clause,” clearly implying a long known capitalist dictum: There are fortunes to be made in misfortunes. But darned if those Eastern bankers didn’t jump the gun on Pillsbury and McKinley by several years. Pillsbury said, “Greatly to our surprise, we ascertained that during the previous three or four bad years, the Easterners had crowded the farmers and either compelled them to pay up or had taken their land.”

What the editorial so innocently ignores (huh!) is how bankers get fat by taking back, for penalties on the dollar, the collateral on their loans: the farm land, the farm house, the tools, outbuildings, crops, etc., etc., then selling the farm land for a huge profit, and then lending the new farmer, or ag-corp, all the money they need at an interest rate that would make the banks really healthy . . . just in time to drive the new farm machinery business, which the new farm owners needed because their mortgages, now, were through the roof. Farm production had to increase; the new farmer had no choice. The prior family farmers were truly victimized in an ages-old banking scam. But this was not enough humiliation put forth from banker to family farmer. No. The decimated farm families were demonized, too, as no-good lazy-butts. The tarred and feathered farmer likely moved himself and family to Chicago with what little they had left, and worked a miserable life making farm machinery.

The bankers basked in all the industrial-hierarchic, domino-tumbling, waterfall of profits, which funded growth in paper, cotton, copper, lumber, steel, pig iron, and tax dollars for a mighty happy Uncle Sam and his ever loyal politicians who had their own debts to pay to our country’s growing manufactures of weapons and war-waging supplies. War was a burgeoning industry conveniently missing from this editorial totem pole.

What would the totem cartoon look like today? Corn, of course, would still be on top, followed, going-down, by [something secret], then again by [something secret], then yet again by [something secret], then by drones, missiles, bombs, guns, bullets, and Happy-meals. Ta-da!!!

In Part Three of the Roots of Anarchism, we’ll combine, from Part One, Kropotkin’s view of anarchy as natural and apply it, geometrically, to what Buckminster Fuller describes as nature’s universal self-organizing coordinate-system (the vector equilibrium) and view it through the human depth psychology discussed in Part Two. Then, we’ll compare why nature’s universal coordinate system is a viable structure of human-sustainability-through-anarchism compared to the man-made, dubiously structured, compressional coordinate system (x,y,z, axes) of dominator-corporate-capital-military-nation-empire.

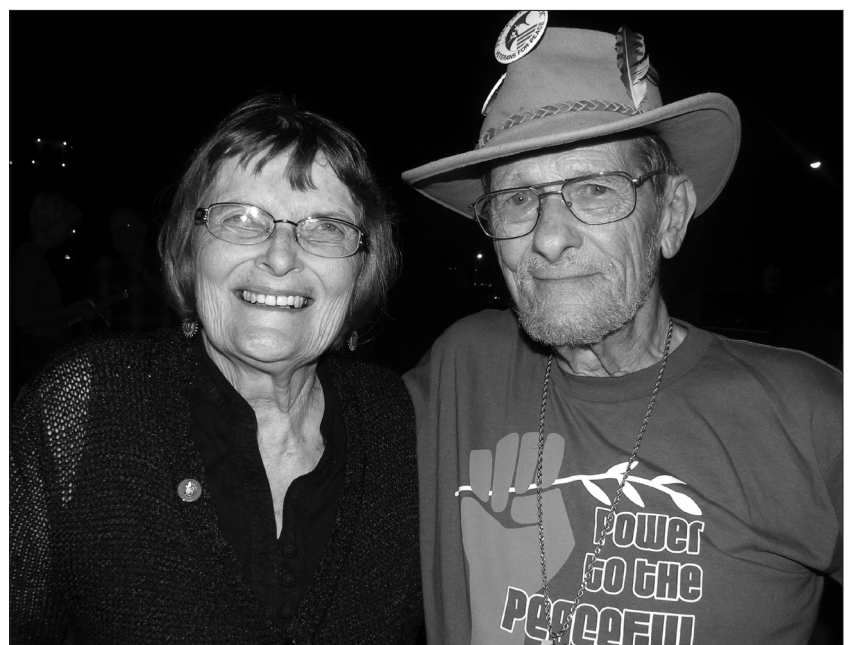




Iowa Vets For Peace bringing Free Bradley Manning message to the IA State Fair Vet's Appreciation Parade review stand.



LEFT: Fr. Carl Kabat jubilantly celebrating his 80th birthday getting arrested at the Kansas City nuke weapons parts plant. ABOVE: Rev. Bob Cook vigiling at Offutt Air Force Base/STRATCOM, August 6-9. BELOW: Jean and Bill Basinger at a Sept. 4th NO WAR WITH SYRIA candlelight vigil in Des Moines.





Former Des Moines Catholic Workers Brianne Boylan and Alex Barnes visiting with their son, Dmitri Nathaniel Iliasu Barnes.



Theodore Kayser, winner of this year's Sugar Creek Saturday night talent show and the Football Mary trophy.



Newlyweds former Des Moines Catholic Worker Colyn Burbank and Hilary Burbank at this years Sugar Creek gathering—Congratulations Colyn and Hilary!



Hy-Vee cookout crew summer 2013.

# STRATCOM Report

by Frank Cordaro

Sixteen is the total number of people who made it out to the STRATCOM gate to be part of the annual 3 1/2 day “shake and bake” vigil of remembrance of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Nine is the highest number reached during the 3 1/2 day effort. It came Tuesday morning, Aug 6th when a contingent from Nebraskans for Peace joined us. Mark Welsh, Tim Rinne and Paul Olson brought with them Nobuko Tsukui. Nobuko is a Japanese scholar of the literature of the atomic bombings, who was a guest speaker at the Lincoln NFP chapter’s annual Hiroshima/Nagasaki Lantern Float three years ago. Since then, she has made it a point to be with us on the line at Offutt during these days of remembrance.

Seven is the number of people who closed our vigil on Friday, August 9. We gathered at STRATCOM’s main entrance. We read St Mark’s account of the Transfiguration and Tomas Merton’s “Original Child Bomb.” We then took a position on the drive, facing Offutt security people. Offutt security read a short statement, we prayed the Our Father, and then went home.

*A couple of notes:*

On the weather: it was excellent for vigiling, the coolest 3 1/2 day vigil on record. We managed to avoid getting wet on Tuesday, August 7 when a thunderstorm just missed us to the north. The rest of the vigil we barely broke a sweat.

On being pathetic: I was more aware of our pathetic efforts than most years. It’s not just the numbers game. We could show up with hundreds of people and it would be



August 9th ending of annual 3 1/2 day Hiroshima and Nagasaki vigil at STRATCOM & Offutt Air Force Base main entrance.

no less pathetic in “REAL” terms. The U.S. War Machine keeps grinding on . . . Then a retired Air Force guy stopped by to talk to us for close to an hour. He said he has seen us doing this witness since the late 1970s and decided this year to pull over and find out why we keep showing up. He wanted

to know our reasoning. It was a wonderful discussion. Not sure if any minds were changed. Yet, from the way he received us and listened to us, it was clear to me that his heart was touched, as were ours. And then I reminded myself that we Catholic Workers are personalists. Like the Gospel

of Luke, we believe the world will be saved one heart at a time. And then I reminded myself what “REAL” change is all about, and that from the perspective of our thriving/grinding USA Empire, our efforts seem pathetic. They always will from an Empire’s perspective.

## 2013 Sugar Creek Report

The big news from this year’s Midwest Catholic Worker Sugar Creek gathering is that we were back at Sugar Creek and it looks like we will continue to have access to Sugar Creek for future gatherings—at least in the near-term.

Over 200 Catholic Workers from nine states and 26 cities and farms attended. IA: Ames, Des Moines, Dubuque, Waterloo, Maloy and La Motte. IL: Rock Island, Chicago, Bloomington and Peoria. IN: South Bend, Bloomington and Ander-

son. MI: Luck, Lake City, Milwaukee and Waukesha. MN: Duluth, Minneapolis, Lake City, Owatonna, Winona. MO: Kansas City, Columbia, St Louis and, in transition, White Rose Farm moving to northeast Missouri next to the Possibility Alliance. OH: Cleveland. SD: Yankton. TX: Austin.

Newest statistic: 70 tents were counted during the weekend. There were more people sleeping outside than inside. The weather was breathtaking the first two days. Sunday morning was a washout with

rain but no one complained (much), given that Iowa is in the mist of a drought. Lots of workshops were offered.

The winner of this year’s Football Mary was Theodore Kayser, a Los Angeles Catholic Worker for the last five years. Theo and his partner Nicole are currently visiting Midwest CWers looking to relocate. Which raised a lot of questions regarding the validity of Theo’s winning the coveted Football Mary, since so many of us Midwest Catholic Worker communities are trying to

recruit them. More later . . .

The big news for us here at the Des Moines Catholic Worker came from Julie Brown. She made our offer to host the 2014 Midwest Faith and Resistance Retreat in Des Moines with our incoming weaponized drone command center as our focus and it was accepted. Now we need to nail down a weekend in March/April and find space for over 100 CWers to come to Des Moines and do direct action at our drones command site. Lots more later.



Sugar Creek 2013

# A Place Called Home: An Experience of Justice

by Reverend Robert C. Cook

Reverend Bob Cook, a resident of the Des Moines Catholic Worker, is well-known for his missionary work in El Salvador, which he recounts in his book *When the Sun Comes up in the West: A Missionary's New Song of Justice and Peace*. Reverend Cook's latest project, discussed below, is as a participant in the Great March for Climate Action (<http://climatemarch.org>). Reverend Cook can be contacted via email at [hermano.robert1@gmail.com](mailto:hermano.robert1@gmail.com).

Two years ago, Frank Cordaro invited me to become a resident of the Des Moines Catholic Worker community. It was an unconditional invitation based on 35 years of mutual friendship. I began living in the community in 2007, when I returned to the U.S. from six years of mission work in El Salvador where I enjoyed a simple lifestyle unencumbered by property ownership. It was a no-brainer that I would continue that lifestyle when I returned to the U.S. The upstairs room at Berrigan House quickly proved sufficient space to be a comfortable place I could call home for the foreseeable future.

I am grateful for Frank's gracious and unconditional invitation for a place to call home where acts of mercy are basic to



Catholic Worker community life. The hungry are fed, showers provided, clean clothes to wear, a mailing address to receive mail. Prophetic truth is expressed in acts of civil disobedience committed in protest of war and violence with knowledge the act may cost those doing it prison time. I am aware I need to ask how I can be present in some way with those community members who care for "the least" by works of mercy. And, how I can be support for those who risk arrest. But first I have a

commitment to walk across the U.S. that is described below.

On March 1, 2014, I will join a group of undetermined numbers (organizers hope for 1000 people) in the Great March for Climate Action. It will begin in Los Angeles and end eight months later in Washington, D.C. with the intention of making a political impact on the U.S. Congress. The distance will be 2880 miles that will travel through Arizona, to Colorado, east through Nebraska (Iowa and Des Moines in July) and on east through Indiana to Washington, D.C. The walk was conceived by Ed Fallon, who has hired three staff to organize the route and support services the walkers will need. It will require eight months to travel, more or less. I have done long distance walks in the 1990's on the annual "Prison Awareness Walks" sponsored by Criminal Justice Ministries of Iowa. The longest of those walks was sixteen days from Ft. Madison Iowa State Penitentiary to Des Moines. Never a day went by that I did not feel some boredom, some pain of blisters, and some time musing over the frequent suggestion that the walk would in fact have an insignificant impact on the issues. Gandhi's words best answer that question. He wrote: "Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it."

To those who ask me why I want to do the walk, I accept Gandhi's philosophy for my answer. It fits the scope and importance of global warming—it is an issue of great proportions that has become the crisis of our time. For now I know it is the next piece of my faith journey and it is very important that I do it.

## Veterans for Peace Des Moines Chapter #163 Report

by Gil Landolt

VFP DM 163 has been busy for the last couple months.

Once again our chapter was a co-sponsor of the annual Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombing observance on Aug 6th at the Japanese Bell on the Iowa State Capitol grounds. This year was a very good showing of many peace folks with speakers, music and singing. A sober reminder of the horrors of US military might undertaken for no good reason at the end of WWII. VFP continues working to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

In July, Des Moines Catholic Workers Ed Bloomer, Al Burney and myself, along with Bill Basinger of VFP DM #163, attended the VFP National Convention held in Madison, WI. "Power to the Peaceful" was the theme of this year's convention. The site for the convention was about two blocks from the Wisconsin State Capitol. With Scott Walker as Governor, the Wisconsin Capitol area was a great location for VFP to express our views with a growing progressive street political movement taking place there. Hats off to Iowa City VFP President John Jadryev who got arrested with other VFP folks and local Madison peace people doing one of their "sing-alongs" at the capitol building where it's against the law to sing. The Governor's Capitol State Troopers arresting the singing protesters gives a whole new meaning to "Police State."

In Madison, we hooked up with two VFP members from the United Kingdom, Ben Griffin and Mike Lyons. They spoke at the convention and rode back to the Des Moines Catholic Worker with Bill and Ed on an invite from Frank Cordaro who organized an Iowa/Missouri "I Will Not Fight for Queen and Country" five day/four city speaking tour.

On their first day in Iowa, before they headed off to Iowa City to speak, they joined 15 Iowa VFP and support-



Iowa and London Veterans For Peace bringing the Free Bradley Manning message to the Iowa State Fair in the Vet's Appreciation Parade.

ers and marched in the annual Iowa State Fair Veterans Day Observance Parade. This was the third year that Iowa VFP has marched in this parade of over 100 floats and military groups and thousands of spectators. And VFP was the only real peace group in the parade.

This year we decided to honor and stand up for Bradley "Chelsea" Manning and also show our support for "No Drones Iowa." We got a warm response from parade watchers but not much positive response from our Governor and those seated in the review stand.

From the Iowa State Fair, Ben and Michael went to Iowa City where they were hosted by VFP Iowa City #161 and VFP Cedar Rapids #169. From there they went to Waterloo sponsored by the by the Cedar Valley Catholic Social Action Network, the Peace and Justice Center of the Cedar Valley, Workers for Peace/Iowa of Cedar Rapids and the Waterloo Catholic Worker. Next they spoke in Columbia, Missouri sponsored by the Catholic Worker and Columbia Fellowship for Reconciliation. The last place they talked was in Des Moines at Rev. Chet Guinn's Fire Station to a warm crowd of peace and justice folks.

What a shame so few people got to hear these guys. But what an honor it was for the VFP, Catholic Workers and local peace people who heard their stories. Des Moines Catholic Worker and Associate VFP member Tommy Schmitz videoed the Des Moines talk and hopefully we will be able to post it in the near future.

The last two events we had a good showing at were, first at the State Capitol, a short notice event, with the theme "No War on Syria," organized by our own Julie Brown, VFP Des Moines Associate and Des Moines Catholic Worker. It had a great turnout of peace folks and good media turnout. The second event was co-sponsorship of a Candlelight Vigil at the Peace Park in downtown Des Moines on September 4. And again a "No War on Syria" theme with speakers and singing that drew 150 people! We can only pray that Congress does what it is supposed to do: represent the people and keep us out of this insane war in Syria.

All vets and peace-minded friends of vets are welcome to come check us out. We meet every month at the Berrigan CW House.

"I, who have dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm my greater responsibility is to serve the cause of world peace. To this end I will work, with others, to increase public awareness of the costs of war, to restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations, to end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons. I want to see justice for veterans and victims of war, and work to abolish war as an instrument of national policy. And to achieve these goals, I will support vets of similar mind who pledge to use non-violent means and maintain an organization committed to these goals and means that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace."

**If you are a vet or service member and can affirm the above statement you need to join a Vets for Peace chapter nearest to you.**

**Nat'l VFP web:**

<http://www.veteransforpeace.org/>

**Why? Because the above statement is a rewrite of the mission statement for the national Vets for Peace organization:**

<http://www.veteransforpeace.org/who-we-are/our-mission/>

**For more info contact:**

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# “Kingdom work is women’s work”

by Frank Cordaro

*This is taken from a homily Frank gave June 16, 2013 at the Union Park Presbyterian Church in Des Moines. Using the readings from the 11th Sunday Ordinary. Text: 2 Sam 12:7-13 / Lk 7:36-8:3*

Today is Father’s Day and I’m not completely blind to this. Still, the theme I’m presenting from this Sunday’s text is “Kingdom Work is Women’s Work”.

Both texts talk about God’s forgiveness. However, the forgiveness God offers in both are not the same. Looking at how women are portrayed in 2nd Samuel and Luke reveals how very different King David’s allegiance to a judging God of Empire is from the allegiance Luke’s Jesus would have us embrace for a loving God of Creation.

We go to the first reading from 2nd Samuel. We all know this story real well. This story is both old and contemporary. It’s about the indiscretions of King David. It’s begins with his lusting for and taking of Bathsheba, having “his way” with her as kings often do. And then the rest of the story is about the cover-up.

It’s always the cover up that gets Kings and Presidents in big trouble. And in this story the eventual murder of Bathsheba’s husband on King David’s command.

In today’s text, Nathan the prophet (read whistleblower) comes to David and exposes him for his sin.

What do we need to know about this sin of David’s?

Even though David commits sexual adultery, it is not this sin of King David’s that the text is interested in. The sin in the text is what King David does after his sexual exploits. It’s all about kings, kingly powers and concerns of nations, worldly nations.

I mean, people like you and I commit adultery and are unfaithful all the time. You don’t have to be a king to do that. This story is about a king who used his kingly powers to cover up his sexual indiscretions, and someone was murdered in the process.

If you’ll notice when God forgives David, the “God” in this story, isn’t that impressive of a forgiver.

David tells God, “I’m sorry, God, that I did this” and God tells David, “All right, this is the deal I’ll give you: I won’t kill you, but everyone who follows in your line, in your family, is going to know nothing but misery, and they’re going to kill each other and it’s going to be a failed dynasty.”

Read the rest of 2nd Samuel, it’s all about the blowback from David’s sin and the rise of King Solomon, and all the lying and killing that took place in between. It’s all about power, it’s all about control, and it’s all about Empire.

Contemporarily, we’re talking about Bill Clinton here. Yeah, Monica Lewinsky! The only thing Bill Clinton said in explanation for his sexual indiscretion was, “because I could.”

When you’re king of Jerusalem, and you’re sitting on the top of your sunroof, atop the highest home in the city, you can see the whole city and everybody below you. And if you are king, the added perk is that you get to see who’s taking baths. That’s a king’s point of view.

Kings being kings, and David acting like Clinton, both got caught in their own cover-ups, both made kingly apologies and both got partial and inadequate forgiveness. Not much power for the God of Creation to work with, in a context in which kings give allegiance to demands of State, an all-loving God and forgiving God has little room to work in a king’s setting.

Now we move to the Gospel of Luke and another story about another woman, actually several women, but the primary woman in this text is only identified as “a sinful woman.” We don’t know what the sins are. Back then, people were sinners for violating social norms, usually surrounding personal relationships, family, domestic and clan, social and economic rules. They were kind of like obvious things everybody knew, that were mostly meant to keep the status quo intact.

This woman, a known sinner, says nothing in the text. It’s not what she says that matters; it’s what she does that is amazing.

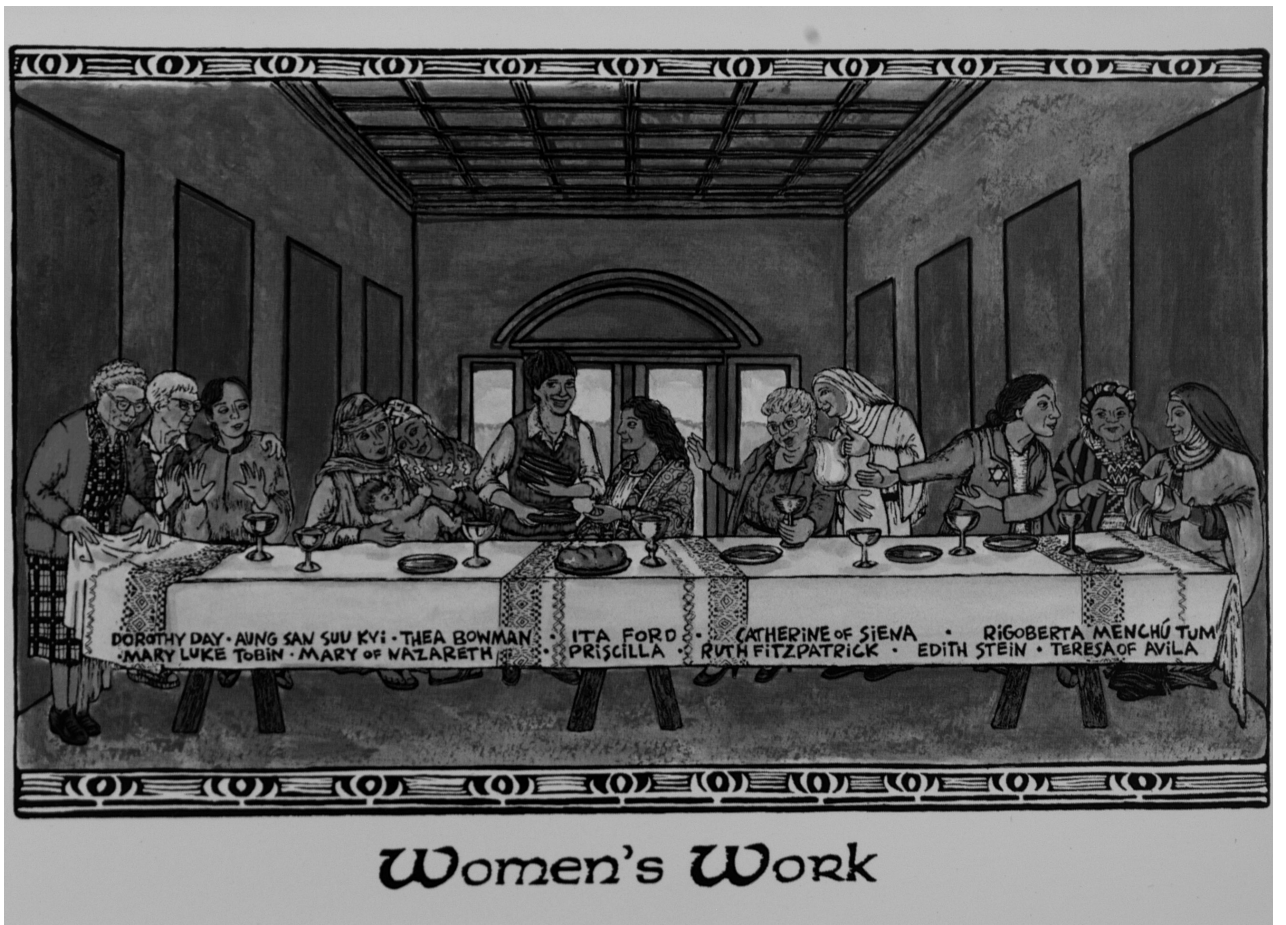
The first thing she does, we don’t culturally notice its significance, but it was a BIG DEAL in the 1st Century. She crashes an all-male scene. Jesus is at a Pharisee’s house. They are reclining at table, meaning it’s a formal occasion. The only women seen at this table are the ones who are serving the guys. That’s the way it was done in that culture in the first century.

She stands behind Jesus and cries. She uses her tears to wipe his feet and she has oil and ointments that she also puts on his feet. That’s what she does. No words of explanation are given.

When Jesus does forgive her, he forgives her totally. There are no holdbacks on this kind of forgiveness. There are no issues of State that have a play in this outcome, except perhaps the issue of allegiance, and who do you serve.

Which brings us to the question; what about the Pharisee and his crowd? Jesus directs most of what he has to say in this text to them.

Pharisees and scribes are spoken of often in the four



Gospels. If you check out what Jesus says about them, you’ll notice Jesus rarely, if ever, has anything good to say. There are some texts—like Luke 11:37-54 and Matthew 23:1-39—that will burn your ears for the harsh things Jesus says about Pharisees and Scribes.

Modern day Pharisees and scribes are today’s lawyers and priests. And because of this, lawyers and priests are problematic professions in the Gospels. Jesus doesn’t think much of them. In the narratives of the four Gospels, they’re trying to do Jesus in.

Why?

Because, like King David, they give their day-to-day, bread and butter allegiance to a system (church or state) based on the exercise of power and control, through force and violence. Any system, good or bad, church or otherwise, that relies on a legal-political-economic system that exercises power and control through the use of force and coercion, will not, and cannot manifest the forgiveness Jesus gave to the women in our story today.

And just like King David, the Pharisee in this story, gives his allegiance to system and religion that has no place in it for the love of God to operate freely.

And the woman, who says not one word, does what she can, gives an example of what forgiven, loved, followers of Jesus “do.” Faith in Luke’s Gospel is an action word, shown in deeds of love and service.

All of this is confirmed in the last three verses of our Gospel text today. After the showdown with the Pharisees, Jesus and his companions continue journeying in Galilee, preaching and proclaiming the Good News of God.

This is very important. Notice who makes up Jesus’ entourage. The text reads there are “the twelve and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities; Mary, called the Magdalene, from whom seven demons had come out of; Joanna, the wife of Herod’s steward, Chuza, Suzanna and many others who provided for them out of their resources” (Luke 8:1-3).

That means when Jesus and the guys were doing their thing, the women were always with them and participating. Plus, and this is the kicker—they bankrolled Jesus. That’s where Jesus got his money to pay for their movement as they began. Women were the most important, prestigious people in the early Jesus movement.

The same group of women followed Jesus all the way to the cross. That’s more than the disciples could say. They are also the same women, Mary Magdalene and company, who first witnessed and proclaimed “Jesus has risen!”

The Gospel of Luke is the only Gospel that has a sequel accompanying it in the New Testament. It’s the Book of Acts. And in the Book of Acts, these same women continue to exercise a great deal of power and authority. When the disciples gathered in the upper room for what could easily be the first Papal Conclave, to replace Judas, women clearly outnumbered the men (Acts 1:13-26).

I’m calling it a “Papal Conclave” equivalent, because replacing one of the 12 original Apostles has got to be equal in rank and place with replacing a Pope. Replacing a Pope is something the Church has done over 250 times.

When the 120 got to the upper room, Acts gives us a list of who was there. First on the list are the Twelve. OK, the first twelve were men. Next on the list: Mary, Jesus’ Mother, and Jesus’ brothers and sisters. So, let’s say Jesus has as many brothers as sisters. Men are still ahead in the count. The last group on Act’s list is all of those women

who followed Jesus from the beginning, bankrolling his movement, serving his needs, witnessing his crucifixion, and proclaiming his Easter message. These same women are in the upper room replacing the missing Apostle and preparing for Pentecost.

Therefore, women clearly outnumbered the men in that Upper Room, any way you cut it. That’s a lot of power, control and authority exercised by women in the early Church, the first Apostolic Church.

What we really need to be asking ourselves regarding these first women disciples is what were they doing right to show their Faith in Jesus. Deeds speak louder than words, through the lens of our Gospel narratives, and women more often than the men lead the way in showing their Faith in Jesus.

When Faith is seen as deed-based, having Faith becomes a matter of allegiance. The root question revealing Faith is to whom do we give our allegiance? This is a central question running throughout the whole Bible, climaxing in the New Testament. No one can be neutral in this regard. As Bob Dylan makes clear in his song, “You got to serve somebody.”

All four Gospels phrase the conflict as between the Kingdom of God vs. the Kingdoms of the World. In the larger Salvation story covered in the whole of the bible, the choice is between the God of Creation and the God of Empire.

In today’s text, King David and the Pharisees may profess in their words their Faithfulness to the God of Creation, but in deeds they give their allegiance to the God of Empire. Because they put their Faith in human systems that exercise power and control, through force and coercion, willing to use violence and kill for what they believe is right and true.

We hold up in stark contrast the Faith of the good women in Luke’s Gospel. Taking the lead of Jesus, the women of Luke, beginning with maiden Mary, set the mark for what Faith in the God of Creation looks like.

The liberation Jesus is pushing in the Gospels for women and men is not done by giving women equal rights in a male-dominated Empire world.

We Catholics are going through it right now—should we ordain women or not? Of course we should ordain women. If we ordain men, then we should ordain women too. Not to do so runs contrary to one of the better cultural instincts of our society. And clearly nothing in the scriptures makes it impossible to do.

Sadly though, ordaining men or women to be Catholic priests in the USA, as the Faith is practiced, is ordaining them to a Church that is more American than Roman, more nationalistic than Catholic. And this is true of most every church and denomination in the country.

The liberation of both men and women in the New Testament comes when men and women follow in the ways of Jesus who said if you want to be the first in God’s Kingdom, you’ve got to be the last and the servant of all.

In the first century, that meant the followers of Jesus took on the roles of women, which were to serve and nurture people instead of the roles of men, which were to control and rule people.

That was the challenge in the first century and it’s the challenge today for us if we want to be a follower of Jesus.

# Marching Toward Peace

by Julie Brown

This week I had the pleasure of meeting Ben Griffin and Mike Lyons, two war resisters from the British military. As I was driving them from Des Moines to Chicago to catch their plane back to London they shared their stories with me. On the drive home, six hours, two king-sized energy drinks, and one anti-war CD provided the environment for a lot of reflection and inspired this writing.

As the tune “Who would Jesus Bomb” played, I remembered both vets had a common element to their stories. As they were taking steps to become conscientious objectors to their duties in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, more than their fellow soldiers and commanding officers, it was the chaplains that berated them both the most for their non-cooperation with what they saw as immoral actions of war.

As someone who has a newfound relationship to God as well as the anti-war movement, and what I would consider at best an average knowledge of the Bible, I don’t claim to be an expert on anything. I do, however, think I am of average intelligence and am qualified to comment on how this made absolutely no sense. In fact, the stories of the military clergy men’s actions got me thinking about the church’s involvement in war in very basic terms that made sense to me for the first time. This started to upset me so much that I stewed on it the entire six-hour trip home! Here are a few of my thoughts.

America has an elected President, not a king of divine birth appointed by God like the ancient empires claimed. So, how then can an elected President declare war and claim that it is not a sin like it’s the will of God? At best, it’s the will of a percentage of citizens. How then can the church claim that killing in the name of this war is not a sin when it’s big business deciding who the bad guys are? Has the church stooped so low as to think that Chevron is in lockstep with God’s will?

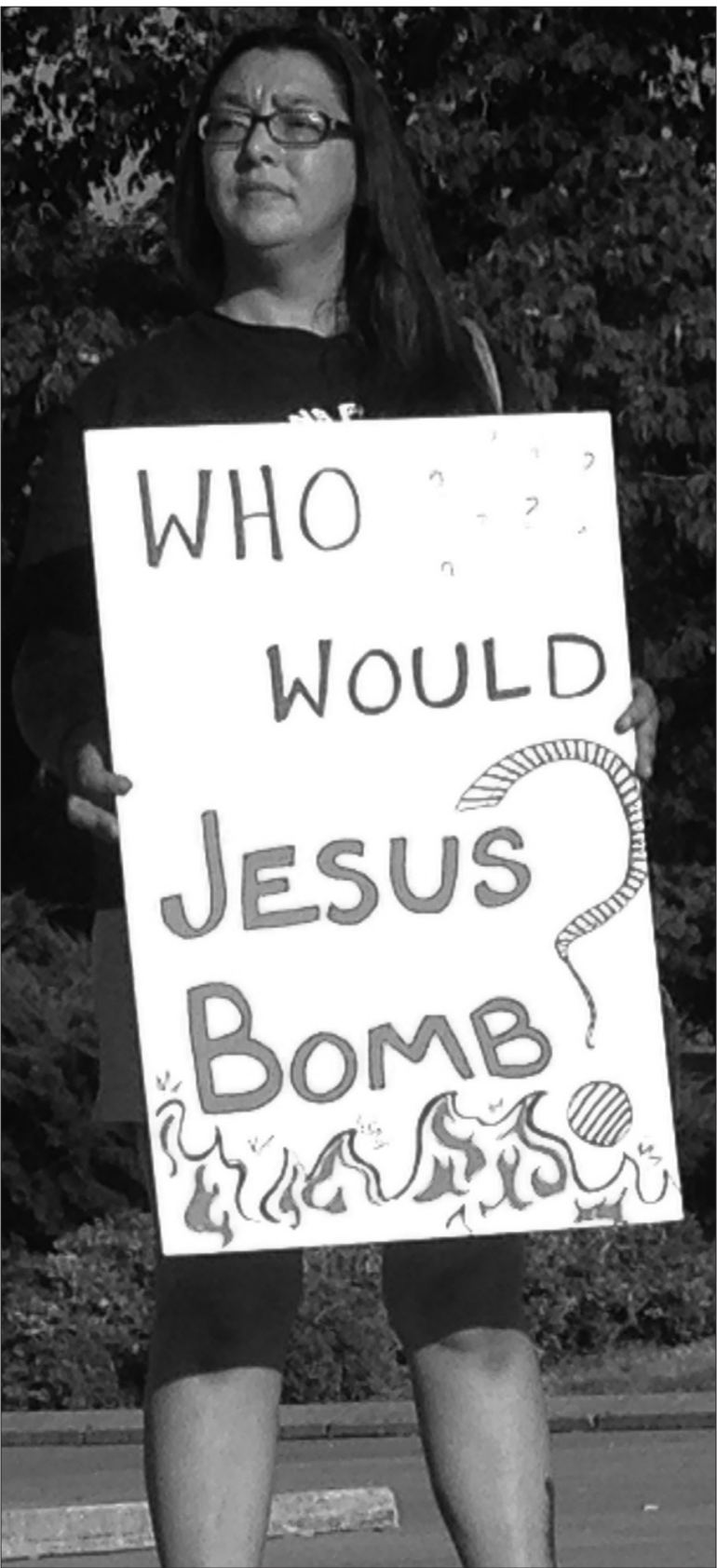
What little I know, I do know that Jesus was a pacifist. The Lord’s Prayer speaks to forgiveness of those who have hurt us. Jesus told us to love our enemies and turn your other cheek to those that would wish to do you harm. I know he cursed a tree once, and staged some protests, but he most definitely didn’t go around killing people. Even in the Old Testament with all the smiting and hellfire and stuff (where people seem to get ammo to justify “Holy Wars”) it says very plainly “Thou shall not kill.” This is very basic stuff that needs no interpretation. Don’t kill people! This is what we teach our children. “Jesus loves the little Children. All the

children of the world.”

To be a Christian means to believe in Jesus the Son of God and that he died on the cross for us. All of us, not just the Americans. Actually, Jesus was Middle Eastern. If he was alive today, I doubt he would even make it to the cross. When he and his radical Middle Eastern disciples sat down in one room for the last supper, the U.S. Forces would surely drone the building. Or, when Judas betrayed him, he would have been taken to Abu Ghraib or Guantanamo Bay or some other place that we keep random Middle Eastern men.

So, with my small but ever growing knowledge of the Bible and the anti-war movement, these are a few things that I know to be personal truths. Jesus does not like killing and God can’t like that, with our free will, we’ve decided to use it to blow each other to bits all over the world. I think you can only follow Jesus OR follow war. Not both.

Then the song “I Ain’t Marching Anymore” played on the CD and this got me thinking even further. As I said, it was a six-hour car ride. I got to thinking what it meant to be marching to war. As I looked at the cars and semis and the factories and farms as they passed I wondered, do you have to have a gun and a rank or are we all marching to war? Just by being on this soil with all of our privilege, our love for cars, computers, electricity, clothes, iPhones, we contribute to a machine that makes these wars possible. Our jobs (no matter what they are) contribute to a war economy. I’ve heard “The Aims and Means of The Catholic Worker Movement” once a week in our weekly meeting for almost two years here in Des Moines and heard numerous people talk about their reasons for civil disobedience, but somehow in these hours in the car a clarity came over me. There is no way to withdraw completely from this system. We can only limit our involvement. If I stopped driving right then and there and decided to ride a bike, some factory still makes bicycles. So let’s say I decided to walk. I would need shoes and so on, and so on . . . What we need to do is to change the system. To stop such a great force, it would take an even greater force. We all need to use whatever weapons of peace that God has given us whether it’s protesting, speaking, visiting other parts of the world, creating art or music, whatever it is, we need to put our skills to work. I believe that if everyone who followed Jesus refused to follow war and instead dedicated their lives as peacemakers then at least we could start to march in a new direction towards peace.



Norman Searah in contemplation at the 2013 Midwest Catholic Worker Faith and Resistance Retreat in Winona, MN.

## NORMAN’S WHEREABOUTS

by Norman Searah

Hello there! I went to New York City in July and had my birthday that same week. I had to deliver a DVD and idea for a modern day pow wow with modern day Indian rock music. By Native American Indians, not made up but real. Showing the culture, maybe adding their language and telling their history. Taking two times off, to first thank the tribe in the beginning of New York City’s history.

If you remember, it was sold to the Dutch and they called it New Amsterdam. And it fell to the British. They called it New York and to this day it’s been called New York City ever

since then. The first New Yorkers were Algonquian-speaking natives that lived in longhouses before the Dutch landed. The Dutch bought the island, which was a forest in 1624, for \$24 work of trinkets.

Now Mayor Michael Bloomberg comes onstage with a descendant chief of the tribe that still lived on Manhattan when it became New York City. And have Mayor Bloomberg thank the chief of the present for now and the past. And let him, the chief, speak for the past and present, then thank everyone, and the band plays on.

Then after a while the band stops and Mayor Bloomberg shows up again. This time he’s not alone on the stage. Behind him is a picture of a lot of people looking at him.

The Mayor tells the other people the image of the new people are from Bristol Bay, Alaska. We can see them as much as they can hear and see us. Too, I would like us New Yorkers to thank them for their salmon, present and future.

For a short while both sides are looking at each other, never knowing what New Yorkers look like or what people in Alaska look like. Now they do. And the Mayor of Bristol Bay, Alaska and others come out, even the Governor of Alaska. To say hello, thank you and to remind you that the state of Alaska isn’t a third world country but a state of the United States, like the rest. But at the end people wave at each other. We’re all people if you look at it.

People in Bristol Bay, Alaska have this large fishery with a lot of fish, mostly salmon. It is so big it could feed the world, and we’re letting big companies along with Big Oil and our wars destroy this Earth. I don’t know what happened at the stockholder meeting in London, England.

I care more about eating fish than the gold or copper in the ground. I feel sorry for not knowing and the people that I don’t know. But we should know the people in our cities or towns that we live in. We should go to their festivals to get to know them more, listen to their music, see their movies, and go to their stores, like food stores. We’re all on this one world. Even animals and plant life and other life. Share it, know it and it will know you.

But back to the pow wow. The idea is to have two pow wows, both different, the one on the next day. Table in a circle full of environmental information that could help people in the area to be aware of, like the weather in New York and

the area could have another Hurricane Sandy if the ocean got warm again for a birth of hurricane instead of the Gulf.

Having people speak of what’s happening in other countries, to see how bad it is in other countries and how fast the ice is melting in the world—people from the United Nations to Greenpeace, to the Sierra Club, NRDC and others, even the local ones, to make it fair. Even the colleges if they’re into environmental things that might help. In fact, it might help the students and the teacher.

Because if you look at the country and the weather and what pops up, it’s a mess sometimes. And the idea is this idea can move from one side of the country to all parts if we as a country let it. By rounding up groups, environmental ones, to talk and share information and get schools involved. Even people trying to clean up rivers like Clearwater that cleaned up the Hudson in New York. Or the young man that was cleaning up the Mississippi river near Davenport, Iowa. I don’t hear much of that but it was good.

I haven’t seen or met anyone cleaning up cigarette butts at bus stops and other places people smoke and throw their butts on the ground. I recall meeting a person at two different times at Rainbow gatherings with the same saying when I was young, which was why don’t we gather all the cigarette butts and fill the Grand Canyon with them. I think if the City or DART bus company cleans up the bus stops by finding someone to do it as a job.

Our dumps are getting full. Why can’t we burn our trash to make our electric power? I recall there was a place that did that.

We at the Catholic Worker had two young men do civil disobedience training for the Keystone pipeline. When I came home from New York City, I thought it was cool, sorry I missed it.

I could go on, we got a lot of problems and mess to clean up and stop before they get started. We need to end all wars, even the small ones.

So thank you for your time,  
Norman Searah

*PS—I would like to hear from you*

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*The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker community*

OCTOBER 2013      WWW.DMCMCATHOLICWORKER.ORG      VOLUME 37, NO. 3

OCCUPY THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE!

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Prayers . . . without them, nothing happens.

### VOLUNTEERS:

Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, cleanup), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance . . . without them, we burn out.

### FOOD:

Fruit, Vegetables, Meat and Fish, Milk, Cheese, Salted Butter, Olive Oil, Sugar, Coffee, Creamer, Juice (sugar free), Salt, Black Pepper, Fresh Garlic, Salad dressing, Soups and Stews (both canned and fresh). Leftovers from weddings, funerals and other social gatherings . . .

### HEALTH AND HYGIENE:

Feminine Hygiene Items, Diapers, Baby Formula, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Multivita-

mins, Antibiotic Ointment, Band-Aids, Lip balm

### TOILETRIES:

Disposable Razors, Shaving Cream, Shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion, Deodorant, Soap, Toothpaste. (Small sizes preferred for handout. . .) Toothbrushes and Toilet Paper.

### NEEDED CLOTHING:

Underwear, Socks, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoodies, Coats, Work Pants. (All Sizes—especially big . . .) Sleeping Bags, Blankets

### HOUSEHOLD

#### SUPPLIES:

Bleach, Laundry Detergent, Environmentally-Friendly Dish Soap, Murphy's Oil

Soap, Pinesol, Trash Bags,

Brooms, Rugs, Candles, Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs, Aluminum Foil, Plastic Wrap, Sandwich and Freezer Bags, Bath Towels, Playing Cards, Candles

### HOUSE REPAIRS:

With four old houses, there are plenty of projects large and small. We invite do-it-yourselfers—individuals or groups—with skills in carpentry, plumbing, painting, electrical, etc. to come in, look over our housing needs, and choose a project. Bring your own tools if possible.

### LIBRARY:

Peace and Justice books for the Berrigan House Library

### \$CASH MONEY\$:

Cash donations are essential to pay our property taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance of property, upkeep and gas for two vans, purchase of needed supplies, our community gardening and for the continued publication and mailing of the *via pacis*, a good 20% of our annual expenses.

## DMCW WEBSITE

For up to date news & info on the community, the Rachel Corrie Project, Berrigan House and Occupy the World Food Prize visit the DMCW webpage: [www.dmcatholicworker.org/](http://www.dmcatholicworker.org/).

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